***Woman in White***

***Part 3***

***Section 1***

***Chapter 9***

### ***The Story Continued by Hartright***

***Summary:***

* Mrs. Catherick gave Walter some clues though, and he knows that the Vestry in Welmingham is a good place to start nosing around, since it's where Mrs. Catherick and Percival were caught meeting.
* The next day Walter heads to the church, where he meets a friendly and chatty clerk.
* The clerk shows Walter the marriage registry, which was in the room where Percival and Mrs. Catherick were caught.
* On a hunch, Walter asks for registries going backwards from Sir Percival's year of birth.
* He starts flipping through them and finds the entry for Sir Percival's parents.
* But it turns out that there's a copy of the registry in Knowlesbury.
* So Walter heads there to continue poking around for clues.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

As [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) exits [Mrs. Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mrs-catherick)’s, he sees the man who shouted at him outside Blackwater Park. This man comes out of the house next door and rushes past Walter. Walter follows him to the train station and hears him buy a ticket to Blackwater. He then returns to his hotel to think over the day’s events. He plans to visit Old Welmingham Church and the vestry the next day. He is beginning to suspect that [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s parents were not married—hence Mrs. Catherick’s disdain about Sir Percival’s mother—and he plans to check the marriage register of the church.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Walter is still being followed by Sir Percival’s spies. He suspects that Mrs. Catherick’s reaction when Walter brought up Sir Percival’s parents holds the key to Sir Percival’s secret. If Sir Percival’s parents were never married, Sir Percival would be illegitimate and unable to inherit his father’s property and title of Baronet. It was considered very shameful to be illegitimate in the nineteenth century, and illegitimate people were considered lower-class even if born into wealth.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) walks to the old village and, when he reaches the church, finds that [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s men who followed him in London are posted outside. They do not approach him, however, and Walter finds [the clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk)’s house and asks to be shown the vestry. The clerk is a cheerful, talkative man and, when he and Walter approach the church, Sir Percival’s men are gone. The clerk takes Walter to the back door of the vestry as the door inside the church is locked. The lock is very old and stiff, and it takes several minutes for the clerk to open the door.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Sir Percival’s men have been told not to attack Walter in daylight so that they will not attract the suspicion of the law. The stiff lock on the door is a detail that becomes important later.

***Summary Part 3:***

Inside the vestry, there are mountains of moldering paper and a couple of ancient wooden printing presses. There are also several boxes overflowing with straw and the window has been bricked up; the only light comes through a skylight in the ceiling. [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) asks to see the marriage register. He knows [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s age, so works backwards from that. Walter asks why the register is left out in the open in the vestry and not locked up, and [the clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk) replies that there is a second copy of it, kept by a lawyer in the town.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Walter knows when Sir Percival was born, so if his parents were married their wedding will appear in the register before this date. It’s worth noting that the vestry is full of paper and straw and has only one exit—facts that will later be important when Sir Percival starts a fire inside.

***Summary Part 4:***

To his dismay, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) finds the marriage of [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s mother and father noted in the register. It is squeezed onto the bottom of a page in a space which looks narrower than the entries around it. He asks [the clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk) for the address of the man who keeps the copy, and the clerk willingly passes it along.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Walter is disappointed but relieved that the copy exists so he can verify the evidence he has found. The fact that the entry is squeezed into a margin is slightly suspicious, however.

***Summary Part 5:***

As [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) leaves the church, he is followed by the two men who he saw earlier, joined by the man in black from the day before. This surveillance leads him to suspect that there is a secret hidden in the church after all.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Walter is convinced he is on the right track because Sir Percival’s men have increased their watch on him. If he was looking in the wrong place, they would probably leave him alone.